

Message Text

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ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 MMS-04 A-01 PER-03 FBOE-00 /018 W

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P 050545Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1125

UNCLAS JIDDA 3177

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: USSAEC

SUBJ: INTERIM STAFFING OF USREP OFFICE

REF : STATE 103293

1. COPY REFTEL BEING FORWARDED TO MCARTHUR FOR ACTION. SAUDIS MAY NOT SO OUT LOUD BUT WILL PROBABLY BE THINKING THAT ELEVEN PERSONS SHUTTLEING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN WASHINGTON OVER SUCH RELATIVELY SHORT TIME SPAN HARDLY MAKES GOOD MANAGEMENT SENSE--PARTICULARLY AT CRUCIAL START-UP PERIOD WHEN SOUND AND QUICK DECISIONS MUST BE MADE. WE SHALL NOT COMMENT ON SAUDIS POSSIBLE COST-CONSCIOUSNESS VIEWS. WASHINGTON MUST HAVE ONE STRONG ADMINISTRATOR WHO CAN ARRIVE ON SCENE AND MAKE SUCH DECISIONS WITHOUT NECESSITY OF HAVING THEM APPROVED BY DELEGATION, AND RECOMMEND THAT WASHINGTON SEEK OUT AND ASSIGN SUCH OFFICER SOONEST. WE SUGGEST THAT SAUDIS WOULD MUCH PREFER TO DEAL WITH ONE PERSON THAN A HOST OF INTINERANTS--ALTHOUGH WITH MCARTHUR IN RESIDENCE, SOME CONTINUITY CAN BE PROVIDED.

2. ACTIVITIES TO BE PERFORMED BY STAFF, METIONED PARAGRAPH ONE REFTEL, ARE IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY THAT OF PURCHASING AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES. WITH THREE WEEKS REMAINING UNTIL FIRST STAFF MEMBER (MOSER) ARRIVES, MUCH COULD BE PERFORMED BY ZEIGLER AND EMBASSY ADMIN STAFF IF GIVEN AUTHROTITY TO PROCEED WITH OFFICE LEASE, TRANSIENT QUARTERS, AND PROCUREMENT OF FURNISHINGS AND EQUIPMENT.

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3. REGARDING PROPOSED OFFICE SPACE, REGIONAL SECURITY

OFFICER RETURNED FROM RIYADH MAY 3 AFTER INSPECTING PREMISES AND DISCUSSING POSSIBLE STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS WITH LANDLORD. LATTER SAID THAT MINISTRY OF EDUCATION WAS PRESSURING HIM TO LEASE TO THEM, AND IF WE DIDN'T COME THROUGH IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE, HE COULD NOT HOLD IT FOR US LONGER. BELIEVE IT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO GET LEASE SIGNED SOONEST WHICH WOULD ALSO ENABLE ZEIGLER TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL REDECORATING, ETC. PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF STAFF.

4. REGARDING TRANSIENT SPACE, WE HAVE INDICATED PREVIOUSLY THAT LOCKHEED IS APPROACCHING ITS BUILD-UP PHASE WHEREBY ITS APARTMENTS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR OUR USE. ZEIGLER SHOULD BE GIVEN AUTHORITY TO PROCEED AND GET USREP TRANSIENT QUARTERS SET UP.

5. THOUGHT SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO EMPLOYMENT OF A COUPLE OF KEY LOCALS TO ASSIST IN GETTING OFFICE ESTABLISHED. THIS SHOULD BE DONE NOW, NOT LATER, SINCE MOST PERSONS WE WOULD WANT TO HIRE WILL NOT BE RECURITED OFF THE STREET BUT WILL HAVE TO GIVE NOTICE TO THEIR CURRENT EMPLOYER.

6. PREVIOUS MESSAGE HAS DISCUSSED NECESSITY TO PURCHASE VEHICLES SOONEST SINCE THIS ALSO WILL TAKE TIME, I.E., THEY CAN'T BE DRIVEN OFF OF SHOWROOM FLOOR.

7. WE SHALL BE INTERESTED IN KNOWNING WHAT DECISION IS BEING MADE ON INSTALLATION OF COMMUNICATIONS CENTER SINCE THIS WILL AFFECT OFFICE PLANNING, AND PERHAPS LEASE ARRANGEMENTS AND FUNDNG, TO SOME EXTENT.

8. EMBASSY LOOKS FORWARD TO PROVIDE WHATEVER ASSISTANCE NEEDED TO GET USREP OFFICE FUNCTIONING AND OPERATING WELL.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT WASHINGTON REASSESS SUGGESTION THAT ELEVEN PEOPLE SHUTTLE IN AND OUT OF RIYADH THIS SUMMER. PLEASE ADVISE SOON ON DISPOSITION OF REMAINING SUGGESTIONS. AKIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975JIDDA03177
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750158-0034
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750581/aaaacwoz.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION TRSE
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 103293
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUL 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <03 MAR 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERIM STAFFING OF USREP OFFICE
TAGS: OTRA, AFSP, SA, US, USSAEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006